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~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Mr. Charles Butler
1323 Redpath Crescent
Montreal, Canada

STATE

SUBJECT: TWA Hijacking

You are hereby requested to deliver immediately the follow-
ing letter to ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Mr. Diallo,
Chairman, ICAO Committee on Acts
of Unlawful Interference With International Civil Aviation:
"Dear Mr. Chairman: I write to you to request that you call
an immediate meeting of the Committee on Unlawful Inter-
ference With International Civil Aviation for the purpose of
considering, and taking all appropriate measures in relation
to, the hijacking of a Trans World Airlines plane to Damascus,
Syria.

"On August 29, at approximately _____ Greenwich Mean Time,
TWA Flight No. 840, eastbound between Rome, Italy, and Athens,
Greece, was hijacked by two persons and diverted to Damascus.
Shortly after the aircraft landed at Damascus, but after all
passengers and crew had disembarked, a timed explosive device,
which apparently had been placed in the forward part of the

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E/OA/AVP:H

8/30/69

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E/TT - Mr. Loy

CLEARANCES:

JX MX Ambassador Johnson NEA - Mr. Davies

IO/UNP - Mr. [Signature]

S/S - Mr. Lloyd

L MR. Rhinclander

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E.O. 12958, as amended
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aircraft by the hijackers, detonated and caused considerable damage to the cockpit and forward cabin areas of the aircraft. In their haste to leave the aircraft, in knowing anticipation of this detonation, several passengers were injured. Since the plane was inoperable, TWA arranged for the retrieval of the passengers and the crew by an aircraft chartered from Alitalia and flown into and out of Damascus on August 30, 1969, for that purpose. ~~The Syrian government released~~ ~~They also released~~ all passengers and crew except ____ passengers who were citizens of Israeli nationality, which the Syrian Government detained. Insofar as is known to my Government, the Government of Syria continues to detain these Israeli citizens.

"My Government considers these acts of armed interference and subsequent detention of passengers to constitute acts which ~~unlawfully~~ interfere with international civil aviation, Jeopardize the safety thereof, seriously affect the operation of international air services and undermine the confidence of the peoples of the world in the safety of international

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civil aviation within the contemplation of the preambulatory language of the Council's Resolution No.____, which established the Committee of which you are Chairman.

"Respectfully, I remind you of ICAO Assembly Resolution No.____, passed at the 16th Assembly of ICAL in Buenos Aires on September 23, 1968. In relevant part, that Resolution invited all States, even before ratification of, or adherence to, the Convention on Crimes and Certain Other Offenses Committed on Board Aircraft to give effect to the principles of Article 11 of that Convention. In effect, this Article calls upon any Member State in which a hijacked aircraft lands to take all appropriate measures to return the aircraft to the lawful control of its commander, and to permit the onward passage of the aircraft, its passengers and its crew.

"My Government assumes that the Government of Syria, being an ICAO contracting State, recognizes fully the obligations imposed on it by this Resolution as well as by Council Resolution No.____ of December ___, 1968, which, in relevant

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part, "urges contracting States to take all possible measures to prevent acts of unlawful seizure of aircraft."

"My Government believes that the failure of the Government of Syria to permit the prompt departure of all passengers on the aircraft in question is not only contrary to the explicit requirements^{or plain intent} of these resolutions, but also tends to encourage rather than discourage acts of unlawful interference with international civil aviation. This is a matter of utmost concern to all nations. It is certainly of central concern to ICAO, whose very purpose of existence is the safe and orderly development of civil aviation, and it is of concern to the ICAO committee you chair. It is important for this committee to ascertain immediately what steps the Government of Syria intends to take to comply with the Resolutions described above, so that ICAO can determine what, if any, further actions appear to be in order.

"It is for these reasons that we ask you to convene this

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meeting on most urgent basis.

Charles Butler
United States Representative"

END

~~ROBERTS~~

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